

Veteran's Day 2005

Update from U.S. Sen. John Cornyn

**Veterans Day – Special Edition
November 11, 2005**

On this Veterans Day, we should take time to honor those who have given so much for America, and to pray for the safety of those brave men and women serving overseas even now to spread the light of freedom.

We must always remember that our own freedom was not won without cost, but bought and paid for with the sacrifices of generations. The lives of America's veterans serve as daily reminders of that truth, for us, our communities, and our children.

And we must always ensure that the United States military has the training, the equipment, and the facilities they require to prosecute the war against terror – from Afghanistan, to Iraq, and across the world. We must use these valuable assets to maintain our military's status as the greatest fighting force the world has ever known, even as we transform to face the challenges of the future.

I strongly believe that the honor-bound agreement between our men and women in uniform and our nation does not end at retirement. No veteran should ever be left behind. And I will continue to work in Washington to make sure that Texas veterans always receive the care and benefits they need and deserve.

When someone leaves home to fight for American security interests abroad, it affects their entire community, their friends and their families. So we must remember not just the sacrifices of the men and women who fight on the battlefield, but the sacrifices of their families here at home. And we must remember families whose loved ones will not be coming back, who paid the ultimate price so that others can live free.

To Texas veterans, young and old, I say: Thank you for your sacrifices, your courage, and your dedicated service in defense of freedom.

Operation Iraqi Freedom: Setting the Record Straight

This week I took to the Senate floor in response to allegations that the Bush administration "manufactured and manipulated intelligence in order to sell the war in Iraq." I believe it's important that the American people know the facts, so I'll continue setting the record straight on Operation Iraqi Freedom and the successes we've achieved in the war on terror.

War is serious business. More than 2,000 Americans have sacrificed their lives fighting to liberate the Iraqi people, and many brave Texans are among them. Today, Iraq represents the central front in the global war on terror.

Yet we have even seen this sad occasion spark an ill-advised and premature call for withdrawal of our troops by the angry anti-war left. That call has been picked up, in part, if not in whole, by some politicians seeking to capitalize on that anger. But merely venting anger without proposing alternative solutions is not the work of serious people.

It is a sad commentary on our public discourse when politicians seek to use the sacrifice of our men and women in uniform to advance a political agenda. I hope my colleagues in the Senate who have politicized this issue by making false allegations of manipulation of intelligence would realize that their allegations only serve to divide the American people and to dishonor the sacrifice of our brave men and women in uniform and undermine critical American resolve to finish the important work that we are about in Iraq.

For more information:

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=248379>

Moving Forward With Important Senate Business

Over the past few months the Senate's priority has been to address the needs of **hurricane victims** and the communities that opened their doors – providing emergency funds for relief efforts, and passing other legislation to facilitate ongoing relief and rebuilding. In addition, **immigration reform** has received much attention in recent weeks as conditions deteriorate along our border, and a serious debate on this issue is now underway. And, the President recently announced his new nominee to the Supreme Court – **Judge Samuel A. Alito, Jr.**, and has requested that the Senate consider his nomination in a thorough and expedient manner. As always, I appreciate hearing from you as I continue working to address the issues important to Texans.

For more information:

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/>

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/hurricane/>

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/immigration/>

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=248109>

Border Security and Immigration Reform

I was heartened when Majority Leader Bill Frist announced recently that the Senate finally would tackle our immigration/border security problems in a comprehensive manner. The legislation will be our first priority when the Senate reconvenes in January. This step is long overdue, and is especially important for Texas. It's critical that we implement comprehensive reform, starting with establishing federal control over our border – and re-establishing respect for our immigration laws.

The major **immigration reform proposal** I introduced with Sen. Jon Kyl of Arizona will be at the center of the coming debate. I want to emphasize that this effort must start with enforcement of the law. We cannot expect anyone to support our immigration reform unless we show we are serious about enforcing immigration laws. We must end the culture of viewing our immigration laws as guidelines that can be ignored when convenient.

My proposal addresses enforcement through a layered approach – control of the border, accountability in the workplace, and robust enforcement in the interior. I am proposing dramatic increases in Border Patrol manpower and equipment, increased resources devoted to technology and infrastructure, and expedited removal – all of this combined will stop the flow of illegal immigrants, drugs and violence. That will be backstopped by vastly expanded detention facilities, increased court resources to process and remove violators, and improved partnerships between local law enforcement and federal immigration officials. My legislation also includes a push for electronic worker verification which will make it possible for employers to ensure that their workers are legal.

For more information:

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/immigration/>

After the Storms: Hurricane Relief and Rebuilding Efforts

Texans in the areas affected by Hurricanes Rita and Katrina continue to get back on their feet, and progress has been made in the recovery, but there's still work to be done. I continue to team with federal, state and local officials to ensure that the victims of these storms have the resources they need to rebuild their lives.

During Hurricane Rita, my office remained open around-the-clock to most effectively respond to requests coming from Texans and to coordinate response efforts with state and local officials. Following the storm, I traveled to Beaumont and the surrounding area three times, including once with President Bush. I also went to Houston and Tyler to meet with local leaders and assess their needs.

At peak, it's estimated that Texas took in more than 400,000 evacuees from Katrina, most of them from Louisiana. Our state has shown unprecedented compassion and generosity in this disaster, and in hurricane Rita. Countless volunteers — from churches, synagogues, and other faith-based organizations, and just good-hearted people — all did their part, all over our state. I introduced legislation to make sure these volunteers would not be subject to legal liability because of their generous spirit. I also wrote a bill to

facilitate prosecution of any fraud and to protect volunteers and their organizations in the reconstruction process.

The **Good Samaritan Liability Improvement and Volunteer Encouragement Act of 2005**, or **GIVE Act**, will provide protection for volunteers across the nation, particularly those working in response to disasters such as Hurricane Rita. I also co-sponsored the bipartisan **Small Business Hurricane Relief and Reconstruction Act of 2005**, part of a package of legislative proposals to assist victims of Hurricanes Rita and Katrina and help small businesses by expanding existing programs and loan opportunities. This was in addition to legislation I introduced in September, the **Katrina Waste, Fraud and Abuse Deterrence Act of 2005** that would prevent and prosecute fraud in the reconstruction process and protect volunteers and their organizations from fraud, theft or embezzlement of Katrina disaster funds.

I am proud of Texas. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison and I continue working hard to make certain the state and localities are compensated for health care, policing, education, housing and other costs associated with these national disasters. We're also prodding the administration to come up with an overall strategy to transition the evacuees back to their homes so they can begin rebuilding their lives. You have my assurance that I will continue to look for ways to support ongoing relief and rebuilding efforts.

For more information:

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/hurricane/>

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=246864>

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=246832>

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=246075>

The Supreme Court of the United States

By early next year, I'm confident we will have accomplished a great deal towards securing a U.S. Supreme Court majority that respects its constitutional responsibilities to interpret laws, and not make law according to personal ideology. After seating a number of long-delayed Circuit Court nominees, including Priscilla Owen of Texas, we easily confirmed **John Roberts** as Chief Justice of the United States in September. After a disappointing episode in which initial nominee **Harriet Miers** was not given a real chance to display her qualifications for the Supreme Court, the President nominated an outstanding jurist, **Samuel A. Alito, Jr.**, to fill Sandra Day O'Connor's seat on the high court.

President Bush asked that we confirm Judge Alito by the end of the year, but it will take one month longer. In any event, consensus is rapidly growing that Judge Alito is highly qualified, extremely fair, and of unquestioned integrity. I believe it will be extremely difficult for the President's opponents to filibuster Judge Alito, and that he will be confirmed by the end of January with more than 60 votes.

For more information:

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/SCOTUS/>

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=246765>

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=247841>

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=248109>

Come By and Say Hello

If you're traveling to Washington for business or pleasure, I would appreciate the chance to say hello while you're here. Every Tuesday that the Senate is in session, I host an open house in my office – Room 625 in the Hart Senate Office Building, from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m., so I can visit with my fellow Texans. Please call Alisa Merritt at (202) 224-2934 to let me know you'll be coming.

Best regards,

Senator John Cornyn